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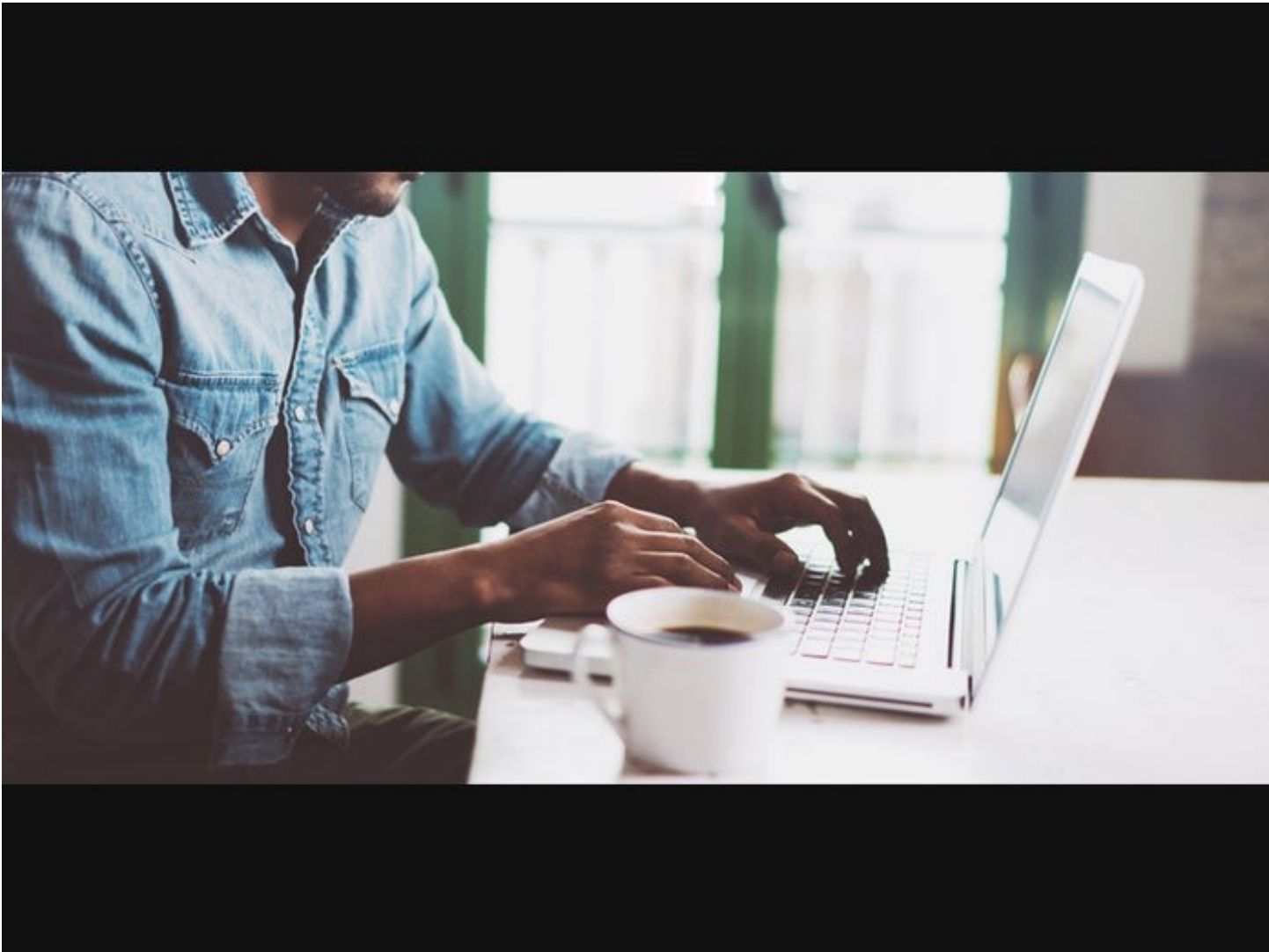
Politics & Government

The Digital Divide: How Philadelphia Area Compares In Internet Usage

More than 150 million Americans don't use the internet at broadband speeds. See how the Philadelphia area com

Local Data, Patch Staff
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PHILADELPHIA, PA — The coronavirus pandemic forced millions of workers and students to work and learn remotely, but a large swath of Americans aren't able to connect to the internet at minimum broadband speeds.

The FCC estimates that 30 million Americans don't have broadband access — including more than six out of 10 rural residents, but some estimates put the total far higher. Tens of millions more do not access the internet at minimum broadband speeds even when it is available.

See below for estimates by ZIP code in the Philadelphia area.

Determining the exact areas where broadband usage is lacking is critical to bridging the "digital divide," a term that expresses how differences in access to computers and the internet create barriers to opportunities in employment and education.

Many rural areas of the country lack access to broadband service. Some households, both rural and urban, simply can't afford a full-priced broadband monthly bill. Other factors like wireless congestion and old equipment can also affect speed.

Microsoft estimates that about 157.3 million people in the United States cannot or do not connect to the internet at broadband speeds, which is defined by the Federal Communications Commission as download speeds of 25 megabits per second and three megabits per second upload speeds.

The company gathered data by ZIP code on the connection speed of devices when they used a Microsoft service in October 2020.

In the Philadelphia area, Microsoft provided the following information on the percent of residents who use the internet at broadband speeds at each ZIP Code. *See editor's note at bottom of article for more detail about the figures.*

- ZIP code 19050: 100.0 percent
- ZIP code 19082: 63.4 percent
- ZIP code 19102: 17.0 percent
- ZIP code 19103: 57.0 percent
- ZIP code 19104: 41.0 percent
- ZIP code 19106: 29.4 percent
- ZIP code 19107: 31.8 percent
- ZIP code 19111: 85.9 percent
- ZIP code 19114: 86.9 percent
- ZIP code 19115: 48.3 percent

[See more ZIP codes for the Philadelphia area here.](#)

Connection speeds can be affected by multiple factors outside the control of a broadband provider. Older routers and devices may not be able to connect at maximum speeds, according to the FCC. Internet speed can drop during the peak hours between 7 p.m. and 11 p.m. Speeds can also decrease if several household members are online at once, especially if they use high-bandwidth applications like video streaming.

President Joe Biden has proposed spending \$100 billion to bring high-speed broadband to all parts of the country. The proposal would prioritize support for networks owned and operated by local governments, nonprofits and co-operatives, which aren't focused on turning a profit. The proposal was made as part of Biden's American Jobs Plan infrastructure package.

Biden wants to use subsidies in the short term to reduce broadband prices, but wants a long-term solution that would reduce the price of internet access. The FCC opened access to its Emergency Broadband Fund, which provides a [\\$50 subsidy per month](#) to households that meet certain criteria.

Didn't see your ZIP code above? [Search by ZIP code and distance here.](#)

Editor's note: This post was automatically generated using [data from Microsoft](#). Error ranges are only included if they are greater than 1 percent; any ZIP codes with an error rate greater than 10 percent were omitted. Please report any errors or other feedback to content@patch.com.

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